(b) whether it is a fact that a four million ton fall in foodgrain production is predicted during the current year as per the Economic Survey 1999-2000;

(c) if so, the reasons therefore specially when we had been self-sufficient in food production during past years; and

(d) what steps are proposed to be taken to retrieve the old position with regard to foodgrain production ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI S.B.P.B.K. SATYANARAYANA RAO): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) The estimates provided in the Economic Survey 1999-2000 have since been updated and the total foodgrain production this year is expected to be 201.56 million tonnes which will be only 1.48 million tonnes less than last year. This marginal decline is mainly due to prolonged dry spell in several parts of the country adversely affected crop condition in several states. In spite of this, the foodgrains production in the country is expected to reach above 200 million tonnes mark.

(d) Review of production is a continuous process. To increase production and productivity of foodgrains in the country the Government is implementing centrally sponsored integrated Cereal Development Programmes in rice/wheat coarse cereals. Based Cropping System Area, National Pulses Development Project etc. Under these programmes/project, incentives are provided to farmers for use of high yielding varieties of seeds, application of integrated pest management, propagation of scientific water management including micro irrigation and use of improved farm implements. Research is also being continuously undertaken to develop improved technologies so as to enhance the productivity and production of foodgrains in India. Field demonstrations of farmers' holdings including training of farmers and farm labourers is being organised for effective transfer of technology.

Scarcity of Drinking Water in Gujarat

4140. SHRI GOPAL SINH G. SOLANKI ; Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government are aware of the grave problem relating to potable water in Kutch and Saurashtra areas of Gujarat;

(b) whether Government have provided financial assistance to the State Government to solve the problem of drought and potable water in these areas;

tc) whether Government are contemplating to send a.Central team to Rajkot, Kutch and other Districts in order to assess the situation there; and (d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI S.B.P.B.K. SATYANARAYANA RAO): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) During 1999-2000, entire Central share of Calamity Relief Fund (CRF) amounting to Rs. 121.05 crore and assistance of Rs. 54.58 crore from the National Fund for Calamity Relief (NFCR) were released. Two quarterly instalments of Central share of CRF for 2000-01 amounting to Rs. 87.42 crore have also been released. The Department of Drinking Water Supply has relesed Rs. 35.42 crore to Gujarat under the Accelerated Rural Water Supply Programme and the Central Ground Water Board has handed over 167 wells to the State Government.

(c) and (d) An Inter-Ministerial Central Team visited the affected areas in January, 2000 for assessment of the situation in the wake of drought. Official from the Department of Drinking Water Supply recently visited Gujarat during 2000-01 to discuss issues related to drinking water in the State special reference to drought conditions prevailing in the State.

Shortage of Water in Chirrapunji

4141. DR. C. NARAYANA REDDY :

SHRI PARMESHWAR KUMAR AGARWALLA :

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that people at Chirrapunji are struggling for water;

(b) if so, what are the reasons for this situation at a place which is considered to be the wettest place in the world; and

(c) whether Government are making any action plan in the matter ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI S.B.P.B.K. SATYANARAYANA RAO) : (a) No, Sir. However, the present supply level is inadequate.

(b) The existing schemes are unable to meet the present water demand. Further, the geological features in and around Chirrapunji are not favourable for retention of rainwater resulting in unfavourable ground water condition. The run off drains down to Bangladesh due to very steep gradiant all-around.

(c) The Government of Meghalaya have launched a new water supply scheme, to augment the water supply, which is under execution.